

SPECIFICATION

TO ALL WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

BE IT KNOWN THAT I, Robert Oroumieh, a citizen of the United States, resident of Diamond Bar, California, have invented a new and useful

Dispenser For Toothpicks and Tablets

of which the following is a specification:

RELATED APPLICATIONS

Reference is made to my Provisional Application No. 60/455,704, filed March 17, 2004, entitled "Mint and Toothpick Dispenser".

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BACKGROUND AND SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The prior art provides various types of toothpick dispensers and tablet dispensers having various features. None discloses or suggests applicant's claimed combinations.

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The dispenser of the invention is typically rectilinear with short side walls to space two housing halves apart to define interior space.

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Defined in the interior of one half of the dispenser are guide walls to guide toothpicks and tablets, the tablets typically being a mint, to respective outlets for use, and to dispense a tablet or toothpick singly, one at a time.

Objects of the invention include the provision of a sanitary, enclosed device which need not be touched by a user until the time of use, toothpicks and tablets being maintained in sanitary condition.

- 5 The dispenser is simplified, easy to utilize, durable in use and in transport, as in a pocket or purse.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Fig. 1 is a perspective view of a preferred embodiment of the present invention;

Fig. 2 is a perspective view of the embodiment of
5 Fig. 1, held in the hand of a user with a gate member open when dispensing a tablet;

Fig. 2A is an enlarged perspective view of a gate portion of the dispenser of Fig. 2 showing retention features for a tablet;

10 Fig. 3 is a perspective view of the dispenser of Fig. 1 in the hand of a user with a toothpick being dispensed; and

Fig. 4 is a perspective view showing two housing members of the embodiment of the dispenser of the invention
15 showing details of internal features which provide the results and advantages according to the invention.

DESCRIPTION OF PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

Referring to the drawings, a preferred embodiment 10 is shown as comprising two housing halves 12, 14 which are generally planar and which are adapted to be forced together to provide a closed dispenser, as shown in Fig. 1.

A separation wall 16 extends longitudinally and is spaced from another edge of the lower housing member 12 (Fig. 4) to provide a defined housing or space for toothpicks 18, and to separate the toothpicks from a space which accommodates a plurality of tablets or pills, typically mints, 20.

The two halves or housing members are adapted to be snapped together to provide a closed housing for tablets and toothpicks. The dispenser may typically be 3" long and 2" wide, with an overall thickness of 1/4", typically.

A plurality of male posts 22 extend from the lower housing member 12, and, as shown, four of the posts are disposed near corners of the member and two are disposed at guide walls 24, 26, as shown. Mating female sockets 28 are adapted to receive

the male posts in force-fitting relation to attach the lower and upper housing members together. The housing halves are manually separable by applying appropriate separation force.

5 Guide walls 24 and 30 serve to guide tablets or mints 20 toward outlet 35. The contours of these guide walls insure that only a single tablet will exit at one time. Guide walls 26 and 17 retain toothpicks 18 longitudinally and are configured to insure that only a single toothpick 18 will exit the outlet opening 27 at one time. The longitudinal wall 17 and guide 10 wall 26 define the outlet opening 27, as shown.

A dispensing gate 32 for tablets, mints or the like extends from the lower housing member 12 and is typically formed therewith. This dispensing gate is opened by the user's fingers to its position shown in Fig. 2. A retaining ridge 15 36 at its outer portion and retention blocks 38 at either side retain a tablet or mint 20 against falling from the gate. The tablet or mint 20 can then be removed and the gate closed, the gate being adapted to engage the upper housing member 14 in a snap fit.

20 A dispensing gate 34 for toothpicks is manually snapped open and is disposed on the upper housing member 14. It is

manually snapped open to enable the exit of a toothpick 18 which is guided by the guide wall 26 to insure that only a single toothpick will exit at a time, as shown in Fig. 3. After the exit of a toothpick, the dispensing gate 34 is
5 snapped shut, engaging the lower surface of lower housing member 12 in a snap fit.